

Iowa Department of Corrections Research in Brief

Mentally Ill Offenders in Community-Based Corrections

April 2008

About the Survey

What: A survey of offenders supervised by the eight district departments of correctional services. This report was commissioned by the Iowa Department of Corrections Focus Group on Mental Health in Community-Based Corrections.

Why: To determine the prevalence of offenders under community supervision who are in need of mental health treatment, and assess how many receive treatment.

When: The survey is based on offenders under supervision on October 15, 2007.

Who: A random sample of probationers and parolees under community corrections field supervision, as well as offenders in residential facilities or being supervised by residential facility staff.

- *Probationers and Parolees.* On October 15, 2007 there were 26,538 probationers and parolees under community corrections field supervision.¹ Self-supervised offenders, and those assigned to large diversion caseloads were excluded, largely due to the lack of information regarding their mental health statuses, resulting in a population of 22,858 from which the sample was drawn. Random sampling was accomplished at the district level, in order to result in valid prevalence estimates for each district. The percent of each district's population sampled ranged from 5.5% for the 5th district, to 26.9% for the 4th district.² The confidence level was 95%, and the sampling was designed for a confidence interval of +/- 5%; actual confidence intervals varied slightly depending on the district's survey return rate.
- *Residential Offenders.* On October 15, 2007 there were 1,600 offenders in residential facilities or being supervised by residential facility staff.³ While initially all residential offenders were surveyed, computation was later performed to determine numbers necessary in order to obtain a 95% confidence level with a confidence interval of +/- 5%, when it became clear not all surveys would be returned. In most districts, more surveys were returned than were minimally necessary, resulting in confidence intervals as low as +/- 2% to 3% in many cases.

How: Probation and Parole Officers and other designated staff completed an on-line survey (encrypted to safeguard confidentiality of the data) on the selected offenders. Lettie Prell, Research Director of the Iowa Department of Corrections analyzed the results, under the direction and consultation of the Focus Group.

¹ Population count is per the Iowa Justice Data Warehouse. Random sampling was based on that day's roster of offenders per the Iowa Corrections Offender Network (ICON). Please note that the community-based corrections population includes other types of offenders (such as those under pretrial release supervision) who are not included in this number.

² Sample sizes necessary to achieve valid estimates varied by the size of the offender population in each district.

³ Population is per the ICON daily count report generated that day, and includes R, VC and VT beds.

Terms

Confidence Interval. The plus-or-minus figure reported when describing statistical findings. For example, if we find that 25% of a sample was mentally ill, and the confidence interval is 5, then we can be “sure” that between 20% and 30% of the population represented by the sample is mentally ill.

Confidence Level. A measure of certainty reported when describing statistical findings. It is expressed as a percentage and represents how often the true percentage of the population lies within the confidence interval. Using the above example, if the confidence level is 95%, then we can be 95% certain that between 20% and 30% of the population is mentally ill.

Field Supervision (or Field Services). The most common form of community-based corrections supervision. Offenders live in the community and report in periodically to Probation and Parole Officers.

Residential Facilities. Community-based corrections residential facilities provide accountability and treatment in a highly structured environment of higher risk offenders. Residential facilities serve offenders on probation, work release and parole, and offenders convicted of Operating While Intoxicated and assigned per the OWI Continuum to an OWI treatment facility. Some Federal offenders reside in residential facilities as well.

Statewide Prevalence Estimate. The statewide estimates in this report are based on the district-by-district survey results, in a manner that takes into consideration the fact that districts vary in size. This is known as a weighted average, with the weights in this case based on the size of each district’s offender population.

About Offender Groupings

Three groups are described throughout this report:

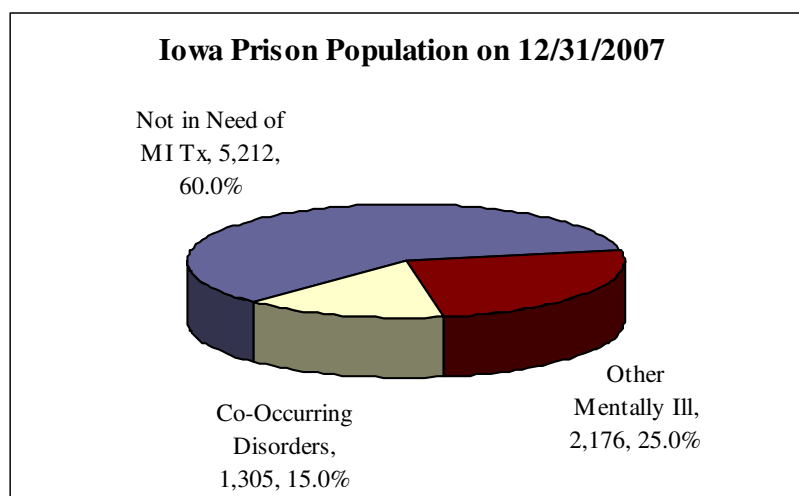
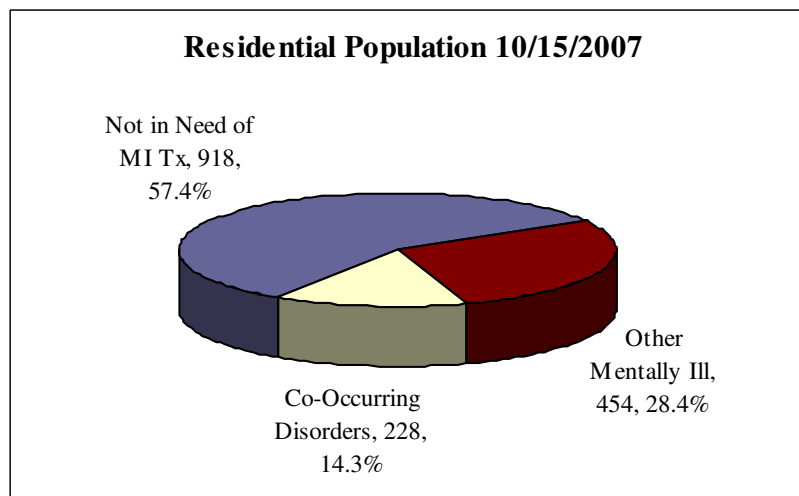
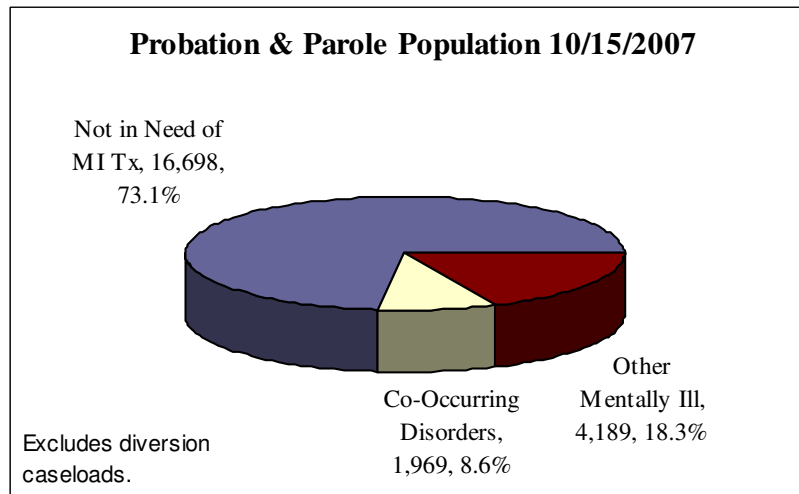
Co-Occurring Disorders. Offenders with a diagnosed substance use disorder, plus at least one other diagnosis of a mental illness.

Other Mentally Ill. All other offenders with a mental illness diagnosis, *except those with substance use disorders only*, who would normally be referred to the substance abuse treatment delivery system, rather than the mental health treatment delivery system.

Not Identified in Need of Mental Health Treatment. This includes offenders with no mental health diagnoses, plus offenders who only have diagnoses of substance use disorders. This category label is often shortened to “Not in Need of MI Tx.” However, readers should be aware that a portion of these offenders likely have mental health treatment needs as well – but were either never formally diagnosed, or documentation of the diagnosis was unavailable to community-based corrections staff.

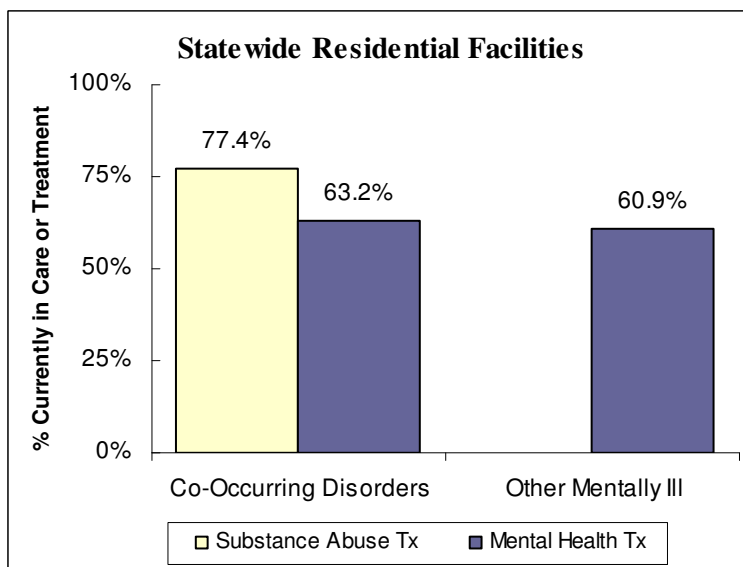
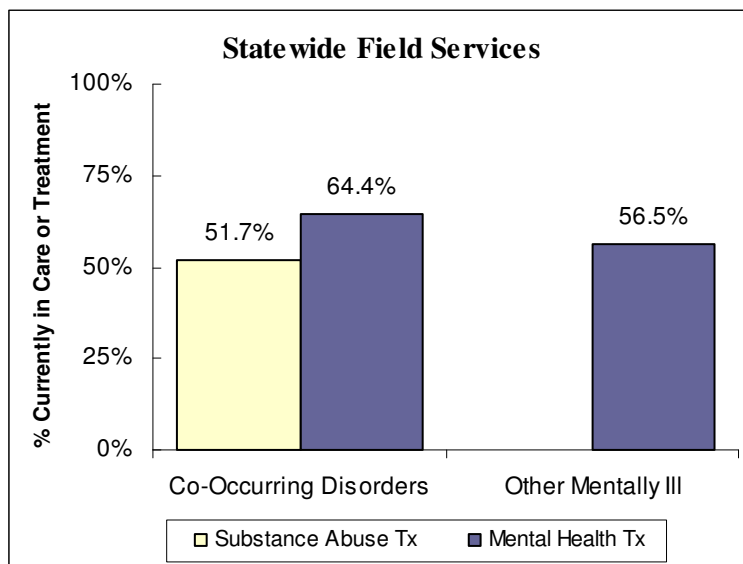
Statewide Prevalence Estimates

As shown in the charts below, 6,158 or about 26.9% of offenders under field supervision, and 682 or about 42.6% of offenders in residential facilities are in need of mental health treatment. Among the prison inmate population, 40% are in need of mental health treatment. Offenders with co-occurring disorders are more common among offenders in prison and residential facilities.



Statewide Estimates: Offenders Currently Receiving Treatment

- **Co-Occurring Disorders.** About 64.4% or 1,268 offenders under field supervision, and about 63.2% or 144 offenders in residential facilities, are receiving mental health care or treatment. About 51.7% or 1,019 offenders under field supervision, and about 77.4% or 177 offenders in residential facilities, are receiving substance abuse treatment.
- **Other Mentally Ill.** About 56.5% or 2,368 offenders under field supervision, and about 60.9% or 276 offenders in residential facilities, are receiving mental health care or treatment.



Statistical Tables: Prevalence Estimates by Judicial District

Estimates: Mentally III Offenders Under Field Supervision				
	Group Population Estimates			
District	Co-Occurring Disorders	Other Mentally III	Not identified in Need of MI Tx	Confidence Interval
1JD	284	972	2,822	5.43
2JD	331	506	2,273	5.37
3JD	238	279	1,789	5.48
4JD	52	82	909	5.02
5JD	499	1,018	5,113	5.34
6JD	345	419	1,455	5.24
7JD	138	408	1,106	5.00
8JD	82	505	1,231	5.30
Statewide	1,969	4,189	16,698	1.90

Estimates: Mentally III Offenders in Residential Facilities				
	Group Population Estimates			
District	Co-Occurring Disorders	Other Mentally III	Not identified in Need of MI Tx	Confidence Interval
1JD	48	130	219	3.78
2JD	10	62	105	3.56
3JD	21	30	42	4.12
4JD	9	26	54	2.24
5JD	59	69	217	4.37
6JD	31	69	120	2.62
7JD	33	34	104	2.06
8JD	17	34	57	5.12
Statewide	228	454	918	1.42

Statistical Tables: Statewide Prevalence Estimates by Diagnosis

Mental Illness Diagnoses: Statewide Prevalence Estimates				
Mental Illness Category	Field Services		Residential	
	Statewide	% of Mentally Ill	Statewide	% of Mentally Ill
Depression	2,674	43.4%	338	49.6%
Anxiety/ Panic Disorders	1,337	21.7%	105	15.4%
Bipolar Disorder	673	10.9%	105	15.4%
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	445	7.2%	26	3.8%
Adjustment Disorder	283	4.6%	22	3.2%
Schizophrenia	282	4.6%	31	4.5%
Borderline Personality Disorder	252	4.1%	34	5.0%
Psychosis/ Psychotic Disorders	133	2.2%	20	2.9%
Dysthymia/ Neurotic Depression	115	1.9%	14	2.1%
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	82	1.3%	17	2.5%
Eating Disorder	62	1.0%	8	1.2%
Brain Injury/ Organic Disorder	21	0.3%	21	3.1%
Dementia	6	0.1%	4	0.6%

The chart below compares percentages of mentally ill offenders with particular diagnosis categories among field services, residential facilities, and the state prison system. Included are all the mental illness categories that could be compared (some diagnosis categories typically utilized for the state prison population do not directly correspond to categories in the community-based corrections survey). The most prevalent mental illness categories, however, are represented.

Statewide Prevalence Estimates Compared to Iowa Prison Population			
Percent of Mentally Ill With Selected Diagnoses			
Mental Illness Category	Field Services Population	Residential Population	Prison Population 12/31/07
Depression	43.4%	49.6%	56.5%
Anxiety/ Panic Disorders	21.7%	15.4%	41.6%
Bipolar disorders	10.9%	15.4%	19.3%
Psychosis/Psychotic disorders	2.2%	2.9%	18.8%
Schizophrenia	4.6%	4.5%	10.5%
Dysthymia/Neurotic depression	1.9%	2.1%	9.4%
Posttraumatic stress disorder	7.2%	3.8%	6.0%
A given offender is counted only once per category, but may be counted in more than one category.			

More statewide findings as well as district results will be available in a full report, forthcoming later this year.